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ADVERTISEMENT

REFLECTIONS

UPON

Sir John Fenwick's Paper.

1791

ADVERTISEMENT.

IT was a considerable time before the Author of the ensuing Reflections, he living in the Country, could get a sight, as it happened, of Sir John Fenwick's Paper; and after that it had moved him to make these Remarks, he sent them to a certain Friend of his, at a distance from him, to whom he left it entirely, whether to make them Publick or not; and since he hath thought fit to pitch on the former, this is only to let the Reader know the reason of their coming thus late abroad. The Author writes with a sincere aim, and if it was possible, would offend none.

Since this was put to the Press, I understood there was another Tract Publishing on the same Subject; which at length I got a sight of; but finding that That proceeds in another way, I see no reason to Suppress this.

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REFLECTIONS
ON THE
PAPER

Deliver'd to the

SHERIFFS of *London and Middlesex,*

BY
25/10
5341
Sir *John Fenwick*, Bar^t,

At his Execution on *Tower-Hill*,
January 28. 1696.

*Evertère Domos Dominis optantibus ipsis,
Dij faciles —*

L O N D O N :

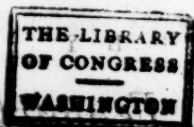
Printed, and are to be Sold by *Richard Baldwin*,
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REFLECTIONS

PAPER

DA463
1697
P4

Sherrifs of London and Middlesex



At his Execution on Tower-Hill
January 28. 1697



REFLECTIONS

O N

Sir *JOHN FENWICK*'s

P A P E R.

TH E Paper is drawn up with less Art, and more Moderation than some others of this kind have been ; though still there is enough as well to require as afford Matter for Remarks and Reflections on it. And because the Case of this Gentleman hath made some Noise in the world, and he hath dy'd now for the Cause in which he was embark'd, I shall take occasion from hence both to raise some Reflections upon his Paper, as also upon that Cause for which he dy'd, and the Circumstances of our Church and Kingdom at large.

For my part, I am far from being unchristianly and uncharitably affected towards Sir *John*, I hope, or any man else :

And as I compassionate any that are sincere my self, so neither am I against any reasonable Compassion that can be shewn them from others. This only provided, That while they shew Compassion to some particular Sufferers, they would not forget that which is due to our Church, Laws, and Nation : That very Church which these Gentlemen exprefs such a mighty Zeal for ; and that very *Old England*, as they love to phrase it, whose Health and Welfare they so frequently drink.

There is a strange Unsettledness and Mutability in Man ; and the present Object, whatever it be, is apt to move him. What men alive were more sensible of the Ruin and Destruction which threatned us in the late Reign, than many of those that are now the Discontented Part of the Nation, and affect to be the Friends of that every way Unhappy and Unfortunate Prince ! They saw plainly *Then*, all imaginable Mischief and Danger coming ; and both rejoiced and assisted in our wonderful Deliverance. Now they can see no manner of Mischief or Danger at all : Nay, so far from that, that they declare that the Nation can never be happy without that Prince's Restoration. As if either himself, or that Monarch he is with, had given the least grounds to think, that they are chang'd in their Interests or Designs : Nay, as if his whole Conduct since the Abdication, his Behaviour in *Ireland*, his present Carriage to the Protestants in *France*, and the different Air (according to their seasons) of the Proclamations and *Manifestos* he hath sent us, had not been sufficient both to open, and to keep open our eyes for ever.

But it hath been too much the Fate and Weakness of Protestants to be deluded with the Artifices of that Church ; and by being imposed upon and divided, to help forwards their own destruction. It is a marvel that neither History, nor our own Experience can teach us this. But those that God in his just Judgments designs to punish, and that will not either take warning or be reform'd, under all the advantages and delays he affords for it, he doth as righteously permit to be blinded

blinded by their Vanity, Superstition and Vice: And if others that are better, and of a soberer sense, prevent it not, they may find in the end the issue of their works. It must move a man's most just Indignation, to see how often the Reformed have been ruined and ensnared through their own Folly, and the Cunning of the Adversary.

But to return to Sir *John*, and his Execution-Paper. He tells us first what Religion he is of, and what that Cause is for which he suffers: And I would not doubt but that he dy'd persuaded and assur'd of both. Nor would I be thought in any thing to bear harder on the Dead, than what the Safety of the Living, and of that present Government, in which, contrary to Sir *John*, I esteem the real Peace and Establishment of our Church and Nation to lye, doth require from me. For while this Speech is plainly drawn up to move Compassion, to promote the Interest of the late King *James*, the Non-jurors, and his other Adherents, and to raise a Prejudice in men against our present Prince and Settlement (this, I mean, it must do in the nature and tendency of the thing); I hope it will not be thought amiss, in one that is a hearty Lover and Honourer of both, and of that Excellent Church I have the Honour to be of, to give such an Answer unto this Paper, as may at the same time do right to Sir *John*, and to our Prince and Government too: Under which, notwithstanding, (that no one may suspect any Interest or Byass) I never received any Emolument or Advantage, save what all in a manner have received by it, the peaceable Enjoyment of both their Laws and Religion; and of that which by the Goodness and Providence of God they were possessed of.

I will charitably suppose (as I said) that Sir *John Fenwick* Di'd well satisfi'd in the Principles and Cause he had espous'd; and let him have all the allowances from God and Men which that will entitle him to; and I think the better of him that he spent so well his last Hours, and Di'd so serious a Penitent, as it is said he did; most heartily wishing, that all the rest of his Way, or of any other, may take occasion from hence to consider

sider of the force and power of Religion ; and be mov'd and induced more timely to reform themselves from Sin : Before, I mean, such a hard necessity as an immediate and unavoidable danger obliges them to.

He is gone, in short, to his great Master, and it shall fare with him better or worse, according to the integrity that was in him ; the Principles of his Life, and Penitence of his Death. For my part, I am an utter stranger to him ; but let him be never so Serious and Established in his Way, yet that, after all, is but to himself, and for himself, and not for others. There is nothing more ordinary then to see men of very different Interests and Religion, Die with great zeal, cheerfulness, and assurance, in Causes for which they have exposed themselves. Let these Causes be good or evil, necessary or unnecessary, mischievous or expedient ; there is nothing to be said to the Passions and Inclinations, the truth of Persuasion, or to Deception and Superstition in these Cases. It can be only said, That God is, and will be, the Judge of all : And that in the very nature of the thing there is a right and a wrong, a better and a worse ; nay, sometimes that which is Heroically Good, and all others diabolically and detestably Evil. We have seen Papists going off Cheerfully and Courageously for very abominable Contrivances ; and some of the Judges of the late King *Charles* the First, Died with much Seriousness and Assurance.

I speak this only to let us see, that the meer dying Stedfastly and Composedly (and this especially helped on by the encouragement of Persons of the like Persuasion, that for their Character he had a Reverence) is no certain sign of the either Wisdom or Goodness of that Cause for which they suffer. It is only a sign, that as to themselves they are well persuaded, and zealous in it. And though in some certain cases people may be more compassionate than in others ; yet if they will run themselves into danger, and embark in desperate and destructive methods to a Settlement and Community, infinitely more considerable than themselves ; and in which

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are concerned great numbers of Persons of a Wisdom, Gravity, Zeal, Learning, Piety and Integrity, which these Gentlemen, the best of them, and few as they are, can in no wise pretend to surmount; If it be also a Turn, Settlement and Deliverance, by God's wonderful Providence settled amongst us; and in which is plac'd by the Generality of the whole Nation, the real Peace and Security of it: If we have a King Just and Worthy, and who, with some Ancestors of his, seems peculiarly rais'd up for the withstanding of over-grown and exorbitant Princes, Persecutors of the Church, and Invaders of the Rights and Territories of their Neighbours; and with whom most of the Princes and States of *Christendome*, Reformed and Un-reformed, are linked in a great and extraordinary Confederacy, for the common mutual support of their Property; I say, in such a case as this, if Men will be thrusting themselves into mischief and danger, and rash and secret Conspiracies, they must reap the fruit of their own doings; they cannot but expect that a Government should take care of it self; and the Life of such particular Persons as these, however zealous and persuaded in their Way, is nothing to the peace and safety of the Community; and they must be contented; if they will have it so, (though I could wish that they would be soberer and better advised) in dying Martyrs for so blessed and glorious a Cause. The Duty, Nature, and Wisdom of their Actions, and so our own too, will be one day perfectly known and understood.

And though I am heartily, the mean while, and unfeignedly sorry for the *occasions*, and for the end they come to; yet I am certain, if we were but free from our other Abominations, the charge of such blood spilt as this, (taking it for granted that he was certainly guilty, and who should be judges of such a matter as this, if not the Wisdom and Justice of our Nation in Parliament?) I say, I trust that such blood spilt as this, for the necessary support and preservation of our selves, (and in which yet notwithstanding we are far from rejoycing) would not be found to lie so heavy on the Nation, as to bring down any Curse or Judgment upon it, what-

ever some, in a popular way, may please to surmise and suggest to us.

If indeed we sought, or delighted in their Blood (or in any of their Sufferings whatsoever) or without most plain attempts to overthrow and destroy it, the Government should use this severity against them, they might justly use such Expressions as these, (I speak not of Sir John's case alone); but as it is, it is only still their own Warmth and Opinion, and that in opposition to the Wisdom, Zeal and Piety, of the rest of the Nation; and God must be the Judge of all in the end; to whom we are not afraid heartily and entirely to commit our Cause; and are sincerely concerned for these, unfortunate Troubles and Divisions of our Brethren; but yet cannot but dispencc with some of their Sufferings, if either they or our selves must be overthrown.

And so much for the Cause he Dies for, and his Serious, Calm, and Composedness in it.

The Revolution, after all, was either Wise, Just, and Warrantable, upon the whole, all its Circumstances considered, not to say Necessary; or it was not; if it was the former, as in my Conscience, and in the presence of God I believe; then all their great noise and artillery, as to this, with their supposed Duty and Martyrdom in destroying it, proves but mistake; and that a mischievous one too, and falls to the ground; If it was the latter, then I grant that we are all involved in a Guilt, and they are more righteous than we: But bating the power of Education and Prejudice, the Arts of the Court in some former Reigns to scrue things to an unreasonable pitch, some Laws and Scriptures ill Interpreted and applied; and a certain Heighth and Zeal which is naturally in some beyond, I think, the bounds of Knowledge and Sobriety; I say, bating these, and the having their Honour, as well as their Persuasion, engag'd; I could never see any solid or wise Arguments for the proving of our Government Unjust or Unlawful. And this is the Religion which taught, I suppose, Sir John his Loyalty, though neither the Reason nor Religion of others, in
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the Case which is here now between us, can teach them any such lesson, but the contrary. And yet I am far from being of loose Principles either, or from thinking that Government is not in the general a sacred thing; and therefore that Persons, except on great and extraordinary occasions, ought to be exceeding tender how they break or disturb it. But then to admit further of no Cases or Junctures, of no Subversion, or Abdication, let Affairs stand as they will at home or abroad, seems such a piece of Weakness, Bigotry, and Extreme on the other side, as I confess for my own part I cannot digest. And I am happy in this, that I have the Wisdom of the Nation, and I believe shall always have, concurring with me.

Having said this with respect to the main scope of the Paper, and chief Difference between us; I shall be shorter in my Reflections upon some other Particulars that are contained in it.

For what he solemnly affirms, That he was not at the Meeting in Leadenhall-street with any Intention to consult about the Invading this Nation by Force; and that he was no way, he declares, Provided for it, or Privy to it, even when it was actually on foot; I shall not much concern my self with them, but will leave it upon his own Truth and Honour, and to the principal Depositions against him upon Oath, and to what appeared to the Houses of Parliament in his Case. He was not, as it should seem, for his coming in by a *French* Power; but that those things were there canvas'd and discours'd, and that in the general he was entirely in the Interests of the late King *James*, and an Actor for his Restoration; neither doth he much dissemble it, nor will any that understood his Conduct and Temper, and how utterly he was against the present Establishment, in the least doubt it.

He affirms solemnly next, That the *Papers* and *Informations* he delivered into a *Great Man* against certain Noble and Honourable Persons, were sent him from *France*. And for this,

It is not to be questioned but he might receive them from *France*; and no doubt but they were anwill'd and forg'd there; and the King also might receive them from thence by other hands: But if he was alive, Sir *John* might be ask'd here, If in his Conscience he believed the Accusations true, or did it with a design to serve the King or his Government? If such forg'd Accusations are Honourable or Just? and if he did not certainly believe, That the whole Policy of *France* is at work for the Ruin and Overthrow of his Majesty and the present Establishment? Which is all that I shall hint as to this matter.

For what he intimates about his abhorring the Villany of the Assassination, and the Service which he did His Majesty in it (I pass over his calling Him the *Prince of Orange*), with his Reflection upon the King, as not sparing of his Life upon that account; I have no more to say, in short, but this; That if he did so delay and declare against it, it was well so far, and honourably done: But though it ought to have its due Praise and Acknowledgment, yet none, I suppose, will esteem it to be the Height of Merit, to dislike so detestable a Practice: And though he abhor'd this, yet as he never discover'd it, so was he otherwise the King's Enemy sufficiently, and embark'd in Designs for his Overthrow and Confusion, and was like to be so while it was in his power. To conclude, As I know of no other Merit in him but this, so His Majesty himself is the best Judge how far it is fit to extend His Mercy to any Person. And as He cannot be accused of Cruelty by any, so they may please to remember, that King *James* himself did him the right, as it is said, after the *Boyn-Fight*, to give Him this Character, *That He was a Merciful Prince*. Not to add, That after the Parliament had Attainted him, His Majesty in all likelihood would be the less inclin'd to recede from the Act of that Great Body.

By King
in his Ac-
count of
Ireland,

For his thanking those Lords and Gentlemen of the Parliament that were against his Attainder, I cannot wonder in the least at it; it was a piece of Gratitude which he might very

very well express towards them; and it being a Case special and extraordinary, no wonder that the Houses were divided about it: And had the Wisdom of that Great and Illustrious Body judg'd the Bill of Attainder not fit to have pass'd, no doubt but the Nation had been well satisfied with what they had judg'd proper in it: And since they thought it fit and proper to be pass'd, it is as much our duty to acquiesce in it. The Laws of Parliament are questionless subject to the Power which made them; and they can alter and enact particular Bills, and have all the reason in the world so to do, as they shall find for the Publick Good and Welfare. And however hard some are pleas'd to esteem this Bill upon Sir *John*, or how fearful soever some may be of Presidents of this nature; yet since it hath been determin'd, and that upon a full view of all the Circumstances of the Case, we should be far from censuring what our *Legislators* have done in this Point of Prudence. For as to any Evil or Injustice with respect to the Person that was concern'd, since he gave so little Satisfaction to either King or Parliament from first to last, was judged by both Houses guilty, upon a full Hearing, and long Debate, and after all the time given and spent in it; since he appeared to the House to make but elusive and evasive Answers, and may well be suppos'd, or his Friends for him, to have corrupted one of the King's Evidence, and seduced him away: There is no one certainly in such a Publick Case, can think that there is any of that Injustice committed against him. And this Unhappy Gentleman must pardon us, if we think him not so *Innocent* as he expresseth himself, or that he di'd without the *Proof* of Treason upon him, as he would have us believe.

Sir *John* is pleas'd to conclude with his Prayers for the late King, his Queen, and the Prince of *Wales*, and for their Return into these Kingdoms; leaving it as his Opinion, or rather positive Affirmation, That these Nations will never be in a state of Peace and Settlement, till that be accomplish'd. If so, we know whom we have to thank for it. But I hope Sir *John's* Prophetick Judgment in this matter will fail him; as it is very remarkable that all the confident Pre-
sages

sages and Assurances of those of this Way, from time to time, nay, and all the dark Plots and Contrivances too in their behalf, both at home and abroad, have hitherto by the Providence of God fail'd them; and I trust they will still do so, both for their and our own sakes, till, contrary unto this Omen, our Nation be establish'd in Rest and Peace. But to return to the Prayer.

For the late King *James*, I wish him in his private Capacity, and that from the bottom of my Soul, all imaginable Happiness and Prosperity, Health, and Truth, and Peace for ever: And so the like to the Queen. But I frankly declare, I never desire to see his Return into this Kingdom: Nor can I imagine what any persons in such a Conjunction of Affairs can propose to themselves in such a Return. Can it be (whatever some may conceive) without a *French* Force and Power? (And we find that this hath always been actually provided) Or without the Blood and Disturbance of the Nation? And if he was again on the Throne, wherein can we expect that he should better or advantage the State of the Kingdom? What Treasures do we think can he bring into it? Nay, what a Burthen, on the contrary, must he bring with him? And with what great Love and Kindness is he like to visit and return to us? Is he alter'd, do we imagine, in his Temper or Principles? Or shall we better in those days (he having Power in his hands) enjoy our Laws, Liberty, and Religion? No doubt but at the first we shall have *Promises* made us, according to the nature of his coming In; and these shall be renew'd and reiterated to us after the known Mode and Genius of their Church, even at the same time that they are meditating our Destruction; and not only so, but pursuing it also actually by all the Steps that shall lye in their Power.

Are we yet so hoodwink'd, as not to understand these things? Or so very stupid as to forget them? But some there are that act hand over head, without the least (it may be thought) serious Consideration of these matters; and so they

they can but gratify their Passion and their Zeal, and vent their Wrath or Uneasiness, no matter what follows, and whether they see three Inches before them, or not. And speaking on these Subjects, what a Paradox is this, That that aspiring King alone, who hath manifested such an Enmity to the Reformation in general, and hath both so ungratefully and barbarously destroyed the Churches of his own Protestant Subjects, should of all others be the only Prince, and that by his sworn Brother and Ally, the late King *James*, that must establish us in Happiness and in Peace. If this be not the Wolf tending of the Sheep, I would gladly be instructed what is. But to return to our Business.

When God hath deliver'd us in such a marvellous manner, and brought us from our dread and fear in *Egypt*, will nothing serve us but to tempt the most High, and return thither? Are our Pots and our Taskmasters, with all the Scorn and Contempt which was then pour'd on us, the greatest Felicity we can propose to our selves? O! but we are now in the Wilderness, and in Trouble, and wearied out with the Travell and Scarcity of the way: And we know very well, as I have before hinted, who they are we are beholden to for it. Had it not been for our Murmurers and Opposers, we might by this time have found the Land of Rest. But while we encourage those from whom we have escap'd, and support to our Cost our own Evils and Troubles, no wonder if we are in straits, and find thus our Rest and Tranquility deferred.

That our Nation hath struggled with very great Difficulties, and doth yet struggle with them, is certain and felt; and by nothing so much, as that late Spoil and Corruption of our Coin, which hath undoubtedly been promoted by all the Arts and Ways imaginable. But that is now, to a very considerable degree, in a new way regulated and advanc'd; and I hope the worst of the Evil and Mischief is over: And however it be at present difficult and grievous, yet shall it be the Ground of a lasting future Benefit to the Nation, and the Honour of this present Reign, that this great Reformation was begun in it.

And

And however the Case of many that have suffer'd through the Difficulty of the Coin, Decay of Trade, or else Losses at Sea, be greatly to be compassionated, and the whole which the Nation hath born, considerable; yet when it is thoroughly consider'd upon what Account it hath so happen'd, and the greater Evils and Miseries these less have preserv'd and deliver'd us from; what a small thing, in comparison, will this appear to be, to the loss of Peace and Liberty at home; to the Overthrow of our Laws, Dispersion of our Church, and the Spoil and Terror of a Conquest and a Persecution? Such as was formerly coming on us, and is still to be expected, whenever that Apostate Church shall come into Power, and prevail over us: Which God forbid.

Our Noble Worthies, the Representatives in Parliament, are so sensible of this, both Houses indeed, as well Lords as Commons, that never did Parliament so assist their Prince, and so long together, from the very Foundation of the *English* Throne and Government unto this day: Nor perhaps were they ever engag'd in a more Important War; and all things consider'd, had a greater ground or occasion for it.

And however it hath pleas'd God not to give our selves, and the Confederate Princes, that full and ample Success that possibly might once be hop'd and expected, nor to bring the War to so speedy an Issue as might be thought: Yet hath there been that Stop and Opposition offer'd to the Mighty Greatness and Counsels of *France*, that it is not perhaps the most unreasonable of Thoughts, that its Power and Treasure is so exhausted, and Subjects impoverish'd, that they will not in haste be fit for any new or grand Enterprize; and will in all probability never be in that Strength and Capacity for Mischief, in the days of this Lofty and Aspiring Monarch, that it hath been. Such hath been, and such, I hope, will be the Event of the War. And what a share our own Valiant and Martial Prince hath had in it, is sufficiently known over the whole world.

It

It is known likewise, that Offers of Peace, and those very considerable, have been made to the Allies; so that they have not been thus combin'd and confederated in vain. And by it may be also seen, to what purpose that mighty *Nimrod* of *France* hath so employ'd his Arms, and disturb'd the World and Neighbourhood about him: Since after his unjust Depredations and Acquisitions, growing sick of the War, he vomits that up in the sight of the Publick, which before he had so greedily swallow'd down. And we may discern from hence, both who the world is to thank for all these Confusions and lamentable Devastations; what a load of Guilt that most *Christian Monarch* (as he is stiled) must have contracted.

So that, to proceed, though God in his just Providence hath not prospered our own and the common Arms to any signal vanquishing and Overthrow of the Enemy, yet considering our long Folly, Discontentedness, and Divisions, and what is more still, that Deluge of Vice and Impiety in the Land; that Carelessness or Contempt in matters of Religion; it is a Miracle of the Divine Mercy, (especially if we consider how others have been chastised), that we are so well as we are; that the common Confederacy hath not long since been broken, our Prince taken off, and we become a Prey to the insulting Enemy. Whereas now we hope e're long to see an end of our Troubles, and transmit, after all, our Rights and Religion entire to our Posterity after us; and who may have reason in our own and other Countries, to bless the efforts of this mighty War, and our so noble bearing the heat and burthen of this great Day: And was the very thing indeed intimated by our Representatives, in that Excellent, as I thought, and Heroick Address offered unto his Majesty at the Opening of this last Sessions of Parliament.

To Conclude, King *James* hath now wholly lost his Right to the Crown and Government of *England*; and for the Prince of *Wales*, I have little to say, till that dark Birth shall be more fully Opened, and it be evidently made out to the satisfaction of the Kingdom, that he is so by that Lineal

Descent Sir *John's* Loyalty is founded upon. We have a Just and Excellent Prince, by the Providence of God, over us in his stead; and in whom, I hope, we shall be long happy. And for the small Interruption there was in the Succession, this is not the first time the *Lineal Descent* hath been authentickly broken and interrupted. King *James* himself told us, *That extraordinary Diseases require extraordinary Remedies*: And I believe themselves would be put hard to it, I mean his greatest Friends, to justify, according to their Principles, what they did about the time of the Revolution to Favour and Assist it.

They have been upon the whole, not unfavourably, I hope, dealt with by the Government; have had a great deal of time and space given them; and nothing but their own violent methods have wrought the destruction of some of them. The King is too strong in his Foreign Alliances, as well as in the Love and Honour of his Subjects, and his Domestick Strength, to be easily Removed from the Throne he sits on: And as they have constantly for the time hitherto been, so notwithstanding any Party they may boast of amongst us, or Pressures on the Nation, yet will they still be mistaken, if they think that on the Arrival of King *James*, they shall find the Nation as it was in the Days of the Glorious Arrival of the Prince of *Orange*. The Taxes indeed are heavy, but we know the difference between these, and those that have been laid on the Protestants in *France*.

So that in fine, in Imitation of Sir *John*, I will Conclude this Paper with a Prayer too, but a direct contrary one to his own. "May that Gracious God that brought him hither for
 "our Rescue and Deliverance, long Preserve our King over
 "us; our present Lawful and Rightful King *WILLIAM*
 "the Third, as in my Conscience I believe, and acknowledge
 "him to be. May God Preserve him in particular from all
 "Barbarous Designs and Conspiracies against him; make him
 "a Glorious Instrument, after all Troubles and Difficulties,
 "for the establishing of Rest and Peace amongst us: Convert
 "the

“ the very Hearts and Spirits of his Enemies, or take away
“ their Force and Power to hurt him. May he unfeignedly
“ seek God, his Great Master's Honour and Glory ; and study
“ the suppression of Wickedness and Vice. May all that have
“ suffered through the common lot and exigencies of the time
“ be comforted and relieved ; and both Church and Nation in
“ due time flourish under him. And that these Prayers of
“ ours may be the sooner heard, may we heartily Confess
“ what we have deserved ; Repent and turn our selves unto
“ God, that we may the better deserve the *Life* of our Prince,
“ with all the Blessings we hope and Pray for by him.

“ As for his Enemies, I speak of all his Violent and Un-
“ reasonable Enemies, let them be clothed with
“ Shame, but upon himself let his Crown Flourish.
“ *Amen.*

F I N I S.